



**DEPARTMENT OF
BUDGET & MANAGEMENT**

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**QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES
PROJECT NO. 050R5800222
Local Telecommunications Access
April 26, 2005**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

This list of questions and responses is being issued to clarify certain information contained in the above referenced RFP. The statements and interpretations contained in the following answers to questions by potential offerors are not binding to the State, unless the expressly amends the RFP. Nothing in the State's response to these questions is to be construed as agreement to or acceptance by the State of any statement or interpretation on the part of the vendor.

1. Please define: automatic exclusion; fast select and fast select acceptance (assume speed dial?); flow control parameter negotiation; initiated priority calling and originated priority calling.

Answer: Automatic Exclusion – BRI electronic key station feature that prevents another person from hearing or breaking into a conversation and does not require manual intervention.

Fast Select – A calling method that allows the user to send a limited amount of information along with a “call request packet” rather than after the packet.

Fast Select Acceptance (assume speed dial) – X.25 packet feature that is transported over the D channel of a BRI or the B channel of a PRI.

Flow Control Parameter Negotiation - X.25 facility that allows the negotiation of packet and window sizes in both directions of transmission.

Initiated Priority Calling – A feature that provides priority or more important call delivery before other calls.

Originated Priority Calling – A feature that provides priority or more important call delivery before other calls.

2. Please specify the need for delayed and abbreviated ringing.

Answer: There is no current need for delayed and abbreviated ringing. The State will disconnect the remaining BRI station sets on June 15, 2005.

3. Please define the specifics needed on CD billing.

Answer: Please refer to Section 2.13.3 of the RFP.

4. Likewise, please define the requirements of online billing.

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Answer: The requirements are the same for paper, CD and online billing.

5. The RFP refers to “packet data on the.....D channel of BRI and PRI business lines”. Packet data can be made available on the D channel of a BRI only; Packet data delivery on PRI's is a B channel function. Would the State accept a feature description of packet data capabilities as delivered over B channels of PRI's?

Answer: No, it is not necessary to include a feature description of packet data capabilities as delivered over B channels of PRI's. Number one (1) applies to BRI's only.

6. The State desires diverse routing and dual homing, upon request. Neither of these terms is defined in Section 1.2, Abbreviations and Definitions. Will the State please provide a definition of diverse routing and dual-homing?

Answer: Diverse Routing – A means of effecting redundancy in a network, with the result being protection from catastrophic failure. Several cables and/or fiber follow different routes to the central office.

Dual Homing – A means of effecting redundancy in a network with the results being protection from catastrophic failure. Local loops serving the same customer terminate in different central offices.

7. The State stipulates the B channels to be allocated for DID, DOD and other 800 service. What is meant by other 800 service? Are you asking for the ability to have 800 service pointed into the trunk numbers?

Answer: The portion of the sentence that refers to ‘and other 800 service’ will be removed via amendment. The State requires DID, DOD and DID/DOD (Call by Call).

8. Section 2.2.3 D-3 thru 6 Service Requirements. These RFP requirements reference ISDN BRI and PRI. These services are not interchangeable and cannot provide the same feature/functionality. Would it be possible for the State to define requirements for each service?

Answer: Currently, the State uses BRI mainly for video conferencing, 2B+D. The State mainly uses PRI for voice trunking capabilities, 23B+D and video conferencing.

9. What types of BRI station sets is the State currently using?

Answer: The State is only aware of one type of BRI set remaining. Those sets are Avaya stations. The sets are scheduled to be disconnected on June 17, 2005.

10. Since the Price Proposal Forms may not be modified, does the State envision a way for an offeror to propose multiple options for a given service? For example, could an offeror propose a Business Line, Network Based Business Lines, ISDN BRI or ISDN PRI to include features plus local usage for a flat monthly price?

Answer: Flat monthly pricing for certain local services is NOT included at present, and can only be reflected via amendment.

11. Can you provide a list of building addresses with the associated number of access lines by LATA?

Answer: No, the State does not have a list of building addresses with the associated number of access lines by LATA.

11. What are the vendor requirements for extending fiber into State operated buildings?

Answer: Each building owner, primarily DGS, must be contacted and coordinated with. Each building has a facility manager contact to discuss requirements, schedule access for walk-outs and the approval of the installation. Each site has different requirements, but in general the vendors can get approval if a State agency is requesting service.

12. Does the State offer use of their existing fiber network in conjunction with another carrier's fiber network to provide network cost reduction?

Answer: The State has a process known as "resource share" wherein State assets such as it's fiber optic network are exchanged for products or services of similar value and purposes. That process is conducted on an individual case basis and is separate and distinct from the procurement process.

13. Can we provide a different pricing structure than what the price proposal forms request?

Answer: No, the Price Proposal Forms must not be altered. The State must be able to compare Vendors' financial proposals using the same criteria.

14. Can you provide a list with the amount of access lines by service type in each LATA that will be included under this RFP?

Answer: No, the State does not have a list with the amount of access lines by service type in each LATA that will be included under this RFP.

15. Can you provide estimated monthly local call and LATA wide usage per LATA?

Answer: The following information is not current but does reflect the average local calls (message units) per LATA:

| | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Washington (236) | 1,600 per month | Hagerstown (240) | 7,500 per month |
| Baltimore (238) | 475,000 per month | Salisbury (242) | 5,000 per month |

16. Is there a minimum percentage of access services given to each vendor selected within each LATA?

Answer: No, there are no minimum percentages of access services given to each vendor selected within each LATA.

17. Can the Contract Manager provide a copy of the State Disaster Recovery Plan?

Answer: Each of the sixty five agencies and commissions of the Executive Branch have Disaster Recovery Plans specific to their needs. The plans will be provided.

18. What is the current platform and/or interface used for receiving CDR reports, electronic billing, order processing and trouble reporting? Please provide screen shots if possible.

Answer: Currently, there is no platform and/or interface used for receiving CDR reports, electronic billing, order processing and trouble reporting.

19. How do the requested services differ if at all, from services provided under the effective contracts? And if they do not differ, does the State intend to displace effective LTS contracts with a new award?

Answer: The State is re-competing its local telecommunications access contract; therefore, this Contract will replace the old Contract and allow ample time for transition.

20. Will the State grant award to a vendor whose solution is based on resale of incumbent carrier facilities? And if so, under what circumstances?

Answer: The State will evaluate each vendor's response according to the technical criteria listed on page thirty-seven (37), section 4.2 of the RFP. There are two (2) incumbents who resale the dominant local carrier's facilities.

21. What is the State's position regarding the use of IP telephony (VoIP) solutions to fulfill some or all of the RFP requirements?

Answer: The State does not control how the vendor provides dial tone type services. The vendor's response must be in line with the requirements of the RFP.

22. Is the State susceptible to selecting a minority or other small business that is both technically sufficient and offers low price, yet whose resources and financial culpability pale by contrast to incumbent providers?

Answer: See Section 4 of the RFP, Evaluation Criteria and Selection Procedure.

23. Does the State prefer MBE participation with viable awardees only or do they encourage MBEs to seek award?

Answer: See Section 4 of the RFP, Evaluation Criteria and Selection Procedure.

24. Will the State entertain a 'partial' response?

Answer: See Section 1.19 of the RFP.

25. Are the locations currently equipped with PBXs? Which are not?

Answer: No, all locations are not currently equipped with PBXs. The State does not have information that identifies which locations don't have PBXs.

26. How are the FX lines currently being used?

Answer: The FX lines are currently being used to provide local calling from areas that would normally be charges as a long distance call.

27. What requirements mandate PRI in some locations?

Answer: PRI are mostly used for access to dial tone at locations where PBXs have been or will be installed. PRI are also used as a transport for video conferencing equipment (point to point).

28. Can the State provide contact information for the PBX vendor? Or provide a list of features currently in use via the PBX?

Answer: The current PBX vendor is Verizon Select Services for NEC manufactured product. The State uses different features at each installed location. The State can not provide a list of currently used features.

20. Is there a reason why features that are standard on a PBX are being sought after via local provider avenue? Does the State agree that many features are a PBX function alone?

Answer: Not every State location has a PBX as its telephone system. The State does agree that many features are a PBX function alone. There are many small locations that don't have PBXs.

21. Please define Directory Assistance requirements.

Answer: Vendor must have automated and/or live operators to provide directory information as requested. A customer may dial 411 and/or 1-800-555-1212 and request a personal or business telephone number.

22. Please define outbound Caller ID requirements.

Answer: Outbound Caller Id requirements are that the vendor pass the information, telephone station number, trunk number and usually the name to the called party so that called party can determine whether to answer the call.

23. Is a VM system currently in place? By what means? (hardware, network?)

Answer: The State most often installs a hardware voice mail system when medium and large key systems are installed and PBXs. The State also purchases voice mail (Answered Call, registered by Verizon) from the incumbent.

24. Can the State supply a list of locations with inventory and billing telephone numbers?

Answer: The State is in the process of compiling a complete inventory.

25. What is a typical BRI application?

Answer: A typical application of BRI is Video Bail Review that is required by the Department of Public Safety and Corrections Services.

26. What is the anticipated revenue of an awarded contract?

Answer: The estimated revenue of an awarded contract is approximately \$15,000,000 per year.

27. In regards to security clearance, is this only required for personnel that will be going to restricted facilities?

Answer: Yes, only personnel required to enter restricted facilities, such as State prisons, are required to have security clearances.